



# Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Navy to Prepare Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Growler Operations at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island**

The Navy has announced its intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for EA-18G Growler Airfield Operations at Naval Air Station (NAS) Whidbey Island, Oak Harbor, Wash. The EIS will evaluate the potential environmental effects associated with ongoing EA-18G Growler airfield operations at NAS Whidbey Island's Ault Field and Outlying Landing Field (OLF) Coupeville, including the proposed introduction of two additional expeditionary Electronic Attack (VAQ) squadrons and the addition of aircraft to the Fleet Replacement Squadron (FRS).

There are two distinct components to the VAQ community: the Carrier Air Wing Fleet VAQ squadrons and the Expeditionary VAQ squadrons. Each has the same mission but they differ in where they deploy (on board aircraft carriers for the Fleet VAQ squadrons versus land based VAQ squadrons). Expeditionary VAQ squadrons do not deploy on aircraft carriers and therefore pilots in these squadrons do not conduct field carrier landing practice at either Ault Field or OLF Coupeville beyond an initial qualification during training in the FRS.

A scoping process will be used to identify community concerns and local issues to be addressed in the EIS. As part of the public involvement during scoping the Navy will host three open house information sessions on the following dates: Tuesday, December 3, 2013 at Coupeville High School (Commons Area), 501 South Main Street, Coupeville, Wash.; Wednesday, December 4, 2013 at Oak Harbor High School (Student Union Building), 1 Wildcat Way, Oak Harbor, Wash.; and Thursday, December 5, 2013 at Anacortes Middle School (Cafeteria), 2202 M Avenue, Anacortes, Wash. 98221. All of these meetings will take place from 4 p.m. – 8 p.m.

The meetings will be conducted in an open house format with informational displays and materials available for public review. There will be no formal presentations. Navy staff will be present to answer general questions on the proposed action and the EIS process.

To be included on the Navy's mailing list for the EIS (or to receive a CD copy of the Draft EIS once it is prepared), interested individuals should submit an e-mail request to [WhidbeyEIS@navy.mil](mailto:WhidbeyEIS@navy.mil) or a written request to: EA-18G EIS Project Manager (Code EV21/SS); Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Atlantic, 6506 Hampton Blvd, Norfolk, VA 23508.

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